

In Nigeria, three journalists injured by gunfire while covering political rally

Nigerian authorities should rigorously investigate violence at a political rally in Lagos on January 8, during which at least three journalists were injured by gunfire, and ensure the safety of reporters covering political events, the Committee to Protect Journalists said.



A campaign poster for Nigeria's incumbent president and candidate Muhammadu Buhari and his Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo, pictured in Lagos, on January 4. Credit: AFP/Plus Utoni Ekei. Source: Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Emmanuel Oladesu, an editor of *The Nation Newspaper*, Temitope Ogunbanke, a correspondent with the *New Telegraph*, and Abiodun Yusuf, a cameraman with Ibile Television, were injured by stray bullets when fighting broke out and shots were fired during a rally held by Nigeria's ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) party, Ogunbanke and Nurudeen Oyewole, a senior reporter at the *Daily Trust* who was also at the rally, told CPJ. Nigeria is [scheduled](#) to hold a national election on February 16.

"The security of journalists should be a priority for all political figures, especially in the period around February's election," said CPJ Africa program coordinator Angela Quintal. "Without safety guarantees, journalists will be unable to conduct their work without fear and keep the public informed."

Oyewole told CPJ that the journalists were injured when a gunfight broke out between rival factions of the National Union of Roads Transport Workers, who are APC members. Oyewole said he saw police arrive and then fire their guns into the air in an effort to intervene. He added that it was unclear whose bullets caused the injuries.

Ogunbanke said he was hit in the face and that Oladesu was hit with two bullets. Both journalists were treated in a hospital, according to Ogunbanke and a [report](#) by the local press advocacy group, International Press Centre. Ibile Television, the station for which Yusuf works, did not immediately reply to CPJ's email requesting information about the journalist's injuries.

Chike Oti, spokesperson for Lagos police, told CPJ that the violence was a result of an "intra-union affair" and was not a premeditated attack on journalists. Oti said that 15 people were arrested in connection with the incident and that the investigation was ongoing.

CPJ's calls to presidential spokesperson Garba Shehu and information minister Lai Mohammed went unanswered. Alhaji Tajudeen Agbede, Lagos chairman of the National Union of Road Transport Workers, called on members to shun violence

and said those who broke the law would be expelled, according to [reports](#). CPJ's calls to Agbede today went unanswered.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>